



Call for applications to the comparative selection procedure for n. 1 collaboration contract on the project “Leveraging Argument Technology for Impartial Fact-Checking” – LATIF

Premise

A comparative selection procedure, based on qualifications and possible interview, as it was approved at the Luiss University Guido Carli Executive Committee on September, 21 2023, is hereby opened for the assignment of n. 1 collaboration contract – according to the National Collective Bargaining Agreement for Collaborators at Private Universities (herein after “ACNC”) within the project titled “**Leveraging Argument Technology for Impartial Fact-Checking**” – LATIF, funded by the European Media & Information Fund (EMIF) as managed by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation., (hereinafter “the project LATIF”), UPC: I53C23000140007.

1. Description of the Project LATIF and object of the Contract

The project LATIF is coordinated by the research center Data Lab at Luiss University Guido Carli - specialized in data, new technologies, artificial intelligence in the fight against disinformation. Within the project LATIF, Data Lab coordinates a high-profile international team composed of experts in digital narratives and disinformation in collaboration with the University of Dundee, the University of Liverpool and with the think tank T6 Ecosystems.

The project LATIF brings the methodology of Competing Hypothesis Analysis (ACH) into the fact checking domain to counteract and control cognitive biases in the fact checking process. The project will develop a new generation of ACH based digital tools to enhance and improve decision-making processes of fact-checking organizations.

The project LATIF begins with a qualitative assessment of fact-checkers' understanding and identification of cognitive bias and then exploits these insights to inform the design of a digital infrastructure to improve fact-checkers' decision-making processes towards impartiality (de-bias fact-checking tool). The usefulness of these tools will then be assessed through the feedback provided by fact-checkers and by observing potential changes in the public visibility of fact-checks enhanced by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The selected candidate will collaborate with the entire Data Lab network in achieving the objectives including the Italian Digital Media Observatory, the national hub of the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO), with Rai, Tim, Pagella politica, NewsGuard, University of Tor Vergata, the Gedi Group with the Republic and others national and international supporters.

The purpose of this **comparative selection procedure** is to select 1 collaborator on **Decoding Information Spread and Leveraging Social Network Analysis for Insights**, specifically through social network analysis to understand diffusion flows of information.

The collaborator will be involved in projects bringing the Analysis of Competing Hypotheses (ACH) methodology to the fact-checking domain to counter and control for cognitive bias in the fact-checking process and in the fight against disinformation. The goal is to develop a new generation of digital tools based on ACH to empower and improve fact-checking organizations' decision-making processes.

She or He would need to undertake a range of tasks to achieve different goals. These tasks include developing the digital tools based on the ACH methodology to empower fact-checkers and journalists to make more impartial decisions. She or He would need to develop the digital tools based on the ACH methodology to empower fact-checkers to make more impartial decisions, working within a multidisciplinary team and in the field of new technologies, traditional media, digital media, with particular attention to the phenomenon of disinformation.

She or He will also study the intersection between Artificial Intelligence and Communication, with the aim of examining debates on new technologies and their global impact from a critical perspective.

The collaborator will be testing the effectiveness and usability of the digital tools with a group of fact-checkers that would then need to be undertaken, and feedback gathered on how the tools could be improved. The data collected from the fact-checkers and any changes in public visibility of enhanced fact-checks would then be analyzed, combining both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The results of the study would be published in relevant academic or professional journals, as well as presented at conferences or workshops. These tasks would include developing algorithms that can effectively implement the ACH methodology in the digital tools, exploring and integrating machine learning techniques to enhance the digital tools' capabilities, developing processes for data collection, cleaning, integration, and storage, conducting statistical analyses to identify significant patterns and trends in the data, selecting appropriate machine learning models, developing appropriate feature sets, ensuring the transparency and interpretability of the machine learning models, and working closely with fact-checking experts to ensure that the digital tools meet their needs and reflect the latest developments in the fact-checking field.

Overall, the project aims to improve fact-checking and in general Media organizations' decision-making processes by developing digital tools based on the ACH methodology to counter cognitive bias.

The collaborator would need to undertake a range of tasks, from conducting a literature review to developing algorithms and statistical analyses, to achieve these goals. The results of the study could have significant implications for improving fact-checking practices and promoting impartiality in the media.

2. Location, duration, and remuneration

Research activities will be carried out at the research center Data Lab at Luiss University Guido Carli under the supervision of the Scientific Coordinator of the project, who will verify correct performance of the contract and the consistency between results achieved and objectives set.

The contract is expected to start, compatibly with the timing of administrative procedures, in the current month and the duration is set in the contract following the comparative selection process, until the end of the project (October 31, 2024).



Tacit renewal of the contractual relationship is excluded.

Presence in Rome is a requirement.

The gross amount of the contract, according to Italian legislation (pursuant to articles 13 and 14 ACNC), is set at € 19,367,00 (Nineteen thousand three hundred and sixty-seven/00 Eur), net of social security contributions to be paid by Luiss University Guido Carli.

The remuneration is subject to social security contributions in a shared percentage with the University. This amount varies on a yearly basis: for 2023, it corresponds to a maximum share of 35.03%, while for 2024, it is unknown to date.

A share of 2/3 of the annual social security contributions is charged to the employer, while the remaining 1/3 share is charged to the employee (normally, the gross salary amount stated on the contract you signed includes the 1/3 share of social security contribution charged on your salary, while it does not include the residual 2/3 which is separately paid by the University).

Luiss University Guido Carli will automatically pay the whole amount due as social security contributions monthly to INPS [National Social Security Institute - Cassa Gestione Separata]

Payments will be made in deferred monthly instalments to be taken from the grant assigned to Luiss University Guido Carli for the project LATIF – (Grant Agreement nr: 268755)

3. Admission requirements

Admission to the comparative selection procedure is allowed providing the following requirements, failing which the candidate will be excluded:

- a) an Italian second-level qualification known as “Laurea Magistrale” or “Laurea Specialistica”, or else an Italian degree awarded under the former university system (ie prior to D.M. no. 509 of 3 November 1999, as amended by D.M. no. 270 of 22 October 2004); 2. a comparable foreign academic qualification allowing access to Doctoral studies in the issuing country in quantitative field like computer science, mathematics, physics or statistics.
- b) Ability to implement models and analyze and visualize data using R and/or Python.
- c) Excellent knowledge of written and spoken English.
- d) Proven experience in conducting research through the analysis of large datasets. Knowledge of network theory, operation research, machine learning (NLP above all) both supervised and unsupervised.

In any case, for admission to the comparative evaluation selection procedure it is necessary that the candidates:

- a) Enjoy civil and political rights.
- b) Not have a criminal record and not be the addressee of measures concerning the application of preventive measures, civil decisions and administrative measures entered in the criminal records database.
- c) Be aware that they are not undergoing criminal proceedings.

The following requirements will be positively evaluated:



- Recent Research PhD qualification obtained in Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, Statistics, Economics and Similar;
- Social Network Analysis techniques to understand the diffusion flows of information, with a focus on decoding information spread;
- Programming Languages, ML, Statistical Analysis, Data Management and Digital Tools Development;
- Understanding of disinformation challenges;
- Technical skills such as data analysis, data visualization, or other relevant technical competencies;
- Ability to work in a multidisciplinary environment and teamwork;
- Artificial Intelligence and Communication: Knowledge and interest in the intersection between Ai and Communication.
- Communication skills and Multidisciplinary collaborations

Further coding skills than that one required for the admission to the present selection and experience in working on applications to social science will be considered a plus.

Candidates in possession of a comparable foreign academic qualification allowing access to Doctoral studies as admission requirement and a recent Research PhD qualification obtained abroad (outside Italy) have to attach to the application, the useful documents (copy of the foreign university qualification that gave access to the PhD included and copy of the Research PhD qualification) in order to allow the evaluation of their Academic qualification and Research PhD qualification, in compliance with the legislation in force in Italy and in the country where the title and international treaties or agreements were issued.

The present comparative selection procedure is not open to those who, on the date of the deadline for the submission of applications, are related, by blood or marriage up to the fourth degree inclusive, to a professor affiliated with the department or unit responsible for this notice of competition, the Rector, the General Manager or a member of the Board of Directors of the University, pursuant to articles 18(1)(b) and 18(1)(c) of Law No. 240/2010 as amended.

The prescribed requirements must be fulfilled by the deadline set out herein for the submission of applications. In the absence of fulfilment of the prescribed requirements for admission or in the absence of a declaration of their fulfilment, the candidate will be excluded from the procedure.

Candidates are admitted conditionally. At any time and by means of a decision stating the reasons therefore, the Administration may exclude a candidate from the procedure for failure to fulfil the prescribed requirements.

4. Applications

Applications must be sent through the online form available on the Luiss University Guido Carli's website at the following link: <https://www.luiss.edu/research/recruiting-calls> without exception, no later than 12pm (CEST, UTC+2) on the tenth day running from the day after the date of publication of this call for applications. If the deadline falls on a public holiday, it will be extended to the first working day thereafter.

The following documentation must be attached to the application:

- a) Curriculum vitae in English where to indicate the level held of English Knowledge and any certifications.
- b) Motivation letter.
- c) Copy of the awarded Academic qualification and awarded PhD or Research PhD qualification obtained abroad (and in those cases, all supporting documents useful for the evaluation of the qualification by the appointed Committee).
- d) Copy of a valid identity document.

After the submission of the online application, including the required documents too be attached, candidates will receive a confirmation message at the e-mail address indicated. In case of non-receipt of the aforementioned email, contact the Research Office (06.8522.5989 - ricerca@luiss.it).

Incomplete applications or applications sent and not received by the deadline will not be considered. Luiss University Guido Carli declines all responsibility for non-receipt of applications deriving from any causes attributable to third parties, fortuitous events, or force majeure.

Finally, it should be borne in mind that the Administration will check the truthfulness of the content of the declarations in lieu received and that, in addition to forfeiture of any benefits obtained on the basis of untrue declarations, the candidate could well be criminally liable for falsification of documents and making false statements.

The submission of an application to participate in this comparative selection procedure shall constitute full acceptance of the conditions set out herein.

Candidates with disabilities, within the meaning of article 3 of Law No. 104 of 5 February 1992, may apply in their application for the facilitations provided for in article 20 of the same law (additional time, special aids, etc.), attaching certification relating to the specific disability issued by the competent local medical commission.



5. Selection Criteria

The selection will be based on qualifications and a possible interview and carried out by a specially appointed Evaluation Committee.

Admission to the possible interview will be established by the Committee after verification of fulfilment of the admission requirements as deduced from the curriculum and documentation submitted by the candidates.

The overall final score -up to a maximum of 40 points- will be given by the sum of:

- the score achieved for qualifications – 30 points
- the score achieved in the possible interview – 10 points

The minimum score to attain eligibility is 18 points. Commission evaluation is final and unappealable.

6. Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee will be appointed after the expiring date of applications submission deadline with a specific Luiss Rector's decree.

The Evaluation Committee shall be composed of:

- the Scientific Coordinator of the project or her delegate;
- an additional project internal or external member;
- an internal or external substitute member.

One of the members of the Evaluation Committee will be entrusted with the task of recording secretary.

7. Evaluation Outcome

The outcome of the comparative selection procedure and the final ranking are published on the Luiss University Guido Carli's website at the following link: <https://www.luiss.edu/research/recruiting-calls>, as well as the list of candidates called to a possible interview and the timetable and the method/location of the interview. Interviews can be conducted remotely, in person face-to-face at a designated location or electronically through a suitable application.

The Committee compiles a ranking in descending order based on the sum of the scores obtained. The above ranking will remain valid until the end date of the projects for needs directly related to the projects and their implementation. In the event of a tie as regards the scores obtained, the youngest candidate shall be afforded precedence. Publication shall be deemed to constitute notification to all intents and purposes.

The winning candidate will be notified at the ordinary e-mail address provided when submitting the application. The position must be accepted within 5 days after date of receipt of the offer, failing which the job offer will be forfeited.



If the winner is a foreign candidate, he or she will have to meet all applicable labour law requirements for foreign nationals at the time of signing the contract. The contract is individual and indivisible. The contract shall not be tacitly renewable.

8. Publication

This call for application is published, as well as on the Luiss website at the following link: <https://www.luiss.edu/research/recruiting-calls>, also on the website <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>.

9. Processing of personal data

Personal data provided by candidates will be processed in compliance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) and Italian Legislative Decree No. 196/2003 as amended.

The data will be collected by Luiss Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli, with registered office at Viale Pola 12 in Rome, the controller regarding the data in question, and processed for the purposes of managing this comparative evaluation selection procedure and the awarding of the collaboration contract, if any, for academic research and dissemination of results.

10. Disputes

The Courts of Rome shall have exclusive jurisdiction over any disputes that may arise in relation to the interpretation and performance of this call for applications.

11. Other rules

For all matters not specifically addressed in this call for applications, reference is to be made to the National Collective Bargaining Agreement for Collaborators at Private Universities (ACNC), the Italian Civil Code and the relevant EU and national laws and regulations in force.

Rome, 13/12/2023

Luiss Guido Carli
The General Manager
Giovanni Lo Storto